

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Office Action dated May 3, 2006 has been received and its contents carefully reviewed.

Claims 9 and 22 are currently amended. Claims 1–12, 14–25, and 27 are currently pending, with claims 1–8 and 15–21 withdrawn from consideration. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 9-12, 14, 22-25 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,646,689 to Matsuda (hereinafter “Matsuda”). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and reconsideration is requested.

Independent claim 9 is allowable in that it recites “at least one buffer line disposed between each of the alignment layer line, the liquid crystal layer line, the sealant coating line, the assembling line, and the cutting line to maintain one of the first and second substrates while the other of the first and second substrates is processed.” Nothing in Matsuda teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention.

The Examiner states robot (9) in Matsuda synchronizes movement of the first and second substrates. Applicants respectfully disagree. Matsuda merely discloses that the robot (9) moves substrates among units of the apparatus. See column 7, lines 20-24. That is, Matsuda does not teach that the robot maintains “one of the first and second substrates while the other of the first and second substrates is processed.” Applicants respectfully assert that the “buffer line” claimed in claim 9 is patentably distinct from the robot (9) taught by Matsuda. Accordingly, Applicants

respectfully submit that claim 9, and its dependent claims 10–12 and 14, are allowable over Matsuda.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of independent claim 22 and request reconsideration. Independent claim 22 is allowable in that it recites “maintaining one of the first and second substrates in a buffer while the other of the first and second substrates is processed.” Nothing in Matsuda teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. Accordingly, for the same or similar reasons as those applying to claim 9 above, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 22, and its dependent claims 23–25 and 27, are allowable over Matsuda.

Applicants believe the foregoing remarks and amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at (202) 496-7500 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

Application No.: 10/607,007
Response dated September 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action dated May 3, 2006

Docket No.: 8734.217.00-US

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed..

Dated: September 5, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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